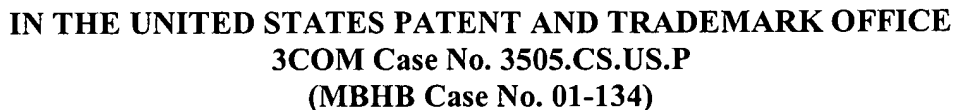


[Signature]



Confirmation No. 9009

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION MAILED AUGUST 11, 2004

Dear Sir:

In response to the Office Action of August 11, 2004, Applicants submit the following amendments and remarks.

Amendments to the Specification begin on page 2 of this paper.

Amendments to the Claims are reflected in the listing of claims which begins on page 6 of this paper.

Remarks begin on page 12 of this paper.